



**US Army Corps
of Engineers** ®
Norfolk District



News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – April 27, 2006
#06-02

Points of Contact:

Nancy Allen, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk, 201-7606
Joe Harris, Virginia Port Authority, 683-2137

Corps completes 50-foot inbound shipping channel project

Port of Virginia now offers deepest water on the East Coast

Norfolk, VA – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District, has completed a \$37 million project to deepen the inbound lane of the shipping channel to the Hampton Roads harbor to 50 feet.

The Corps deepened the harbor's outbound lane of the channel to 50 feet in the late 1980's.

The project, begun in July of 2003, was completed in three phases: the Thimble Shoals channel in 2004, the Norfolk Harbor channel in 2005, and finally, the Atlantic Ocean channel this year. The dredging was accomplished by Weeks Marine, Inc., Cranford, N.J.; Norfolk Dredging Company, Chesapeake, Va.; and Great Lakes Dredge and Dock Company, Oak Brook, Il. The project was completed on schedule and under budget.

"We are proud to have completed this project with the cooperation of our non-federal sponsor, the Virginia Port Authority (VPA)," said Col. Yvonne J. Prettyman-Beck, Norfolk District commander. "The added channel depths, and widening in some areas, will provide a safe, navigable waterway while allowing the largest ships in the world to call on the Port of Virginia. This will bring economic benefits to Hampton Roads, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Nation."

"The completion of this project, combined with the investment the VPA has made in its facilities, assures that this port has the ability to serve the biggest ships afloat -- and

those of the future,” said J. Robert Bray, the VPA’s executive director. “It also means that Virginia’s community of 240 warehousing and distribution centers can continue to grow and receive their cargo from this port.”

The Port of Virginia is the world’s leader in coal and tobacco exports and is the second largest container port on the East Coast, just behind the Port of New York/New Jersey.

#